Admiral Sees Pueblo Inquiry As Routine

By Selig S. Harrison
Washington Post Foreign Service

SEOUL, Dec. 24—A Navy spokesman said today that the Pueblo crew members would undergo a post-Christmas intelligence debriefing "for perhaps as long as two weeks" and would then go before a routine court of inquiry. Rear Adm. Edwin E. Rosenberg told a news conference, before the crewmen were flown to San Diego, that they are a "group of heroes and Captain Bucher is a hero among heroes."

When the statement provoked charges from newsmen that he was prejudicing the court of inquiry, Rosenberg retorted, "I am not prejudicing the investigation. The inquiry will determine the facts. It will determine what acts of heroism have occurred. It will determine what acts, if any, are in violation of the military code of conduct."

Then the Admiral declared that "I think we have to reserve judgment. As far as the U.S. Government and the Navy are concerned, these men have acted honorably. They are well-regarded members of the naval profession and we have to give them time to tell their story."

A newsman took exception to the Admiral's comparison of the Pueblo crew with the Apollo astronauts, asking whether this would not create prejudicial public atmosphere prior to the court of inquiry. Angrily, Rosenberg said he had only intended "a vague comment of comparison of how we treat them."

The presiding officer at the court of inquiry will be Vice Adm. H. G. Dowhen, currently commander of the Anti-Submarine Warfare Force of the Pacific Fleet.

Reporting on the medical condition of the men, Col. A. C. Buchanan, who examined them at the Army Hospital here after their release from 11 months in North Korean captivity, said that "between 20 and 30 per cent of the men show some evidence of recent maltreatment or beating."

He said malnutrition was widespread among the crew "not because of what I would call starvation or deliberate efforts but because of the low standard of the food they ate a good deal of the time."

A frequent complaint of the men was over the Korean style of spicy pickled cabbage called "Kimchi," said Buchanan, "and I doubt any of the men will ever be able to eat cabbage again."

Asked if any of the men had betrayed a feeling of guilt as a result of their forced confessions in North Korea, he said that such feelings "were never expressed."

N. Korea Denounces U.S. on U.N. Resolution

Reuters

HONG KONG, Dec. 25 (Wednesday)—North Korea today charged the United States with bringing about an illegal U.N. General Assembly resolution to cover up aggression and war provocations in Korea.

A Foreign Ministry statement quoted by the North Korea Central News Agency said that in the Deec. 20 resolution "the imperialists brazenly claimed their troops should continue to occupy South Korea under the name of U.N. forces and the U.N. Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea should stay in South Korea for an indefinite period."